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A GENERAL
VIEW OF THE BILL
PRESENTED TO PARLIAMENT,
FOR PREVENTING
THE ILLICIT EXPORTATION
O F
British Wool and Live Sheep.

[Price Two Shillings.]

A GENERAL
VIEW OF THE BILL
PRESENTED TO PARLIAMENT
DURING THE LAST SESSION,
FOR PREVENTING
THE ILLICIT EXPORTATION
OF
British Wool and Live Sheep.

IN WHICH ARE EXHIBITED,

The Origin of the Enquiry;
Remarks on the Inefficacy
of the present Laws to
prevent the Exportation
of Wool;

The Principle on which the
Bill is founded;

Curfory Observations on the
Nature of the Evidence
which will be produced to
the House of Commons.

General Observations on
what has been advanced
by different Writers, on
the Expediency of per-
mitting the Exportation
of British Wool;

AND

Remarks on the Conduct
of some Persons who
have publicly attacked
the Bill.

WITH MISCELLANEOUS

Reflections on the Woollen Manufacture,
As connected with the Present Enquiry.

ADDRESSED TO THE MOST NOBLE

THE MARQUIS OF LANSDOWN,

BY THE

CHAIRMAN of the GENERAL MEETINGS.

BATH, PRINTED BY R. CRUTTWELL; AND SOLD BY
C. DILLY, POULTRY, LONDON.

MDCCLXXXVII.

THE MOST NOBLE

The MARQUIS of LANSDOWN.

MY LORD,

YOUR Lordship having frequently condescended to converse with me on the subject of the Woollen Manufacture, I am desirous of introducing the discussion of a question of considerable importance, and which is intimately connected with it, to the notice of the public, under your Lordship's patronage.

The extensive knowledge which your Lordship possesses, both of the actual state of the Trade and Commerce of this Kingdom, and

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also of its relative situation with respect to our general commercial intercourse with foreign countries, justly entitles you to general respect; and to no person can I address myself on such a subject with more satisfaction than to your Lordship.

The Woollen Manufacturers, being now perfectly united in sentiment respecting the increasing practice of smuggling British Wool to France, and the inefficacy of the present laws to prevent it, are determined to bring forward this session of Parliament the Bill which was presented last year, with such alterations and amendments as have been proposed since the recess.

The various misrepresentations which have been held out to the public, of the real design

sign of the manufacturers, and which have been industriously propagated and invidiously commented on by a *noble Author* in his speech at a County Meeting, and by writers of inferior rank in periodical publications, have induced me occasionally to notice their unjust charges through the channel of the publick prints, and to challenge them to a proof of their assertions; but as it is extremely disagreeable to answer similar objections, continually brought forward by different persons, I intend this address to your Lordship as a kind of general answer; and I have the more readily undertaken this mode of reply, as it affords me an opportunity of considering the question in a more diffuse manner than can possibly be effected in the compass of a letter designed for insertion in a newspaper.

Through the whole of this arduous undertaking, I have been uniformly guided by facts, without being biaſſed either by party, or by perſonal intereſt; and the ſame line of conduct will, I truſt, mark all my future proceedings; as a ſtrict adherence to truth, without regarding the partial reaſonings of any ſet of men whatever, can alone ſatiſfy my own mind, or afford me the leaſt proſpect of being in this inſtance ſerviceable to my country. To your Lordſhip's, and to the publick candour, therefore, I moſt willingly ſubmit the following obſervations on the Wool-Bill.

Before I proceed directly to the conſideration of my ſubject, I beg leave to ſtate the origin of the enquiry, and its progreſs to the preſent time; the conduct of the manufacturers

turers

turers having, in this instance, as well as others, been much misrepresented.

In the year 1784, some persons in the Woollen Trade, in Somersetsshire, being alarmed by the accounts which they had received of the smuggling of wool in that part of the country, requested by publick advertisement a meeting of the manufacturers and wool-dealers at Bristol fair. In consequence of this request, a very numerous and respectable meeting was held, at which I attended, without the most distant idea of taking an active part in the business; but that meeting having been pleased unanimously to call me to the chair, I could not consistently with propriety decline it.

The informations received at this meeting, respecting the smuggling of wool and live sheep, were deemed amply sufficient to warrant a further inquiry; and the resolutions entered into for that purpose were made publick.

Soon after the manufacturers of the West had met at Bristol, a similar meeting was held at Leeds in Yorkshire. The resolutions of this and other subsequent meetings in those parts were transmitted to me, as also some information on the subject; and a mutual correspondence for facilitating the operations of the manufacturers in general, soon after took place.

Some considerable seizures of wool having been made in the river Thames, and in Dorsetshire,

Dorsetshire,

setshire, and fresh discoveries in the smuggling of wool being continually produced, the manufacturers were stimulated to act with firmness and vigour; and a very liberal subscription was entered into for defraying the necessary expences.

At a meeting held at Bath, a memorial was drawn up, and presented to the Lords of the Treasury, praying that the laws for suppressing the smuggling of wool might be more vigorously executed; and it was likewise resolved, should it appear necessary, to apply to Parliament for more ample provisions to restrain the fraudulent exportation of this valuable article.

Personal application was made to his Majesty's ministers on the subject, and the
strongest

strongest assurances were received of the support of Government; but the important discussion of the Irish propositions so much engaged the attention of Parliament, that it was judged most adviseable to drop all further application at this time. In the mean while I employed myself in a strict investigation of the subject, and drew up observations on the present laws, and a rough sketch of a plan for new regulations: but so many difficulties presented themselves to my view, that I felt myself inclined to drop the prosecution of the scheme.

The manufacturers, when again assembled, were however determined to persevere in the prosecution of the object for which they had united; and, as I very ardently wished to bring the matter to some issue, I delivered
my

my papers, by the direction of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, into the hands of Mr. *Rose*; and the Solicitor to the Customs received orders to peruse them, and to prepare the draft of a bill for the inspection of Ministry.

Copies of these papers I had previously transmitted to the meeting at Leeds. At that time the draft of another bill for suppressing the smuggling of wool, drawn up by a custom-house officer, was sent for my perusal, and a copy of the same was conveyed to the manufacturers in the North. This bill being the work of a person unacquainted with the nature of the woollen manufacture, contained many objectionable clauses; and a groundless opinion prevailing in the North, that it had received the sanction of Government, and probably some other clauses

concur-

concurring, an unexpected and violent opposition arose in that quarter, and a memorial was presented to the Lords of the Treasury, praying that no alteration whatever might be made in the subsisting laws respecting the exportation of wool.

This unexpected event not a little endangered the success of our measures; for it was signified to me, that Government could not bring forward any proposition, while the manufacturers were so much divided among themselves.

But this defection of the Northern manufacturers was in some measure compensated by an accession of strength from other quarters. The merchants and manufacturers of Exeter, experiencing a want of wool, held
a meeting

a meeting in that city, and came to resolutions somewhat similar to those which had been originally entered into at Bristol; and almost at the same instant, the wool-dealers in the county of Kent, perceiving that the smuggling of wool in that county had considerably increased, assembled at Canterbury, and offered to send delegates to a general meeting of the manufacturers to be held in London. Such a meeting was also proposed by the gentlemen of Exeter; and having received the sanction of the manufacturers assembled at Salisbury, an advertisement, announcing it, was published in the papers; in consequence of which, *delegates from eighteen counties* (which, exclusive of Yorkshire, included the manufacturing interest of nearly the whole kingdom) met at the Crown and Anchor tavern in the Strand. Here again I
was

was nominated to the chair. The meeting was so very respectable, that Government thought proper to give their *approbation* and *concurrence*, and a considerable number of the members of the House of Commons honoured the meetings by their attendance; and being perfectly satisfied with the evidence produced, came to several resolutions in support of the measures of the manufacturers.

A Committee being formed, and the heads of the proposed bill being drawn up, we solicited an examination before the House of Commons. Leave was obtained for a committee of that House to receive evidence; which being by them deemed satisfactory, a report was grounded on the same, and the bill was ordered to be printed; but the session was so far advanced, that nothing further
could

could be done in the business. At this time a part of the manufacturers in the North expressed their desire of joining in an application to Parliament; and two persons of consequence, from that district of Yorkshire which had appeared the most inimical to our designs, attended our committee at the Crown and Anchor some days before it broke up, and expressed themselves perfectly satisfied with the impartiality of our proceedings: we had therefore some reason to hope for a reunion; but from many circumstances which had occurred since the adjournment of the General Meeting in London, I must confess I placed but little dependance on so desirable an event.

The opponents of the bill have exerted themselves to the utmost, not only in misrepresenting

presenting the clauses which it contains, but in propagating such insinuations as were most likely to widen the breach that had unhappily taken place. But all their efforts proved abortive, as appears from the proceedings of a general meeting of the Nobility, Land-owners, Wool-growers, Manufacturers, &c. lately held at Bradford in that county, for the purpose of taking the proposed bill into consideration; who have resolved to support an application to Parliament jointly with the manufacturers of the West, and have deputed three gentlemen to attend the next meeting which may be held in London. Thus, my Lord, after all the conflicts we have sustained from internal dissensions, and the avowed efforts of the opponents of the bill, the bond of union is likely to be drawn closer than ever; and all those manu-
facturers,

facturers, who are more immediately interested in the success of the bill, will with one voice present their requests to the legislature.

Though I rejoice at this union, yet it is not because I view it in the light of an opposition to the landed interest. No, my Lord; I am fully convinced, that both interests are in this kingdom inseparably united, and that it is madness to expect they can ever be separated without mutual disadvantage.

The resolutions of the meeting at Bradford give the highest sanction to the proceedings of the general meeting in London; since nothing but the force of evidence could have operated to produce such a change of sentiment, in a part of the country which had before professed itself so inimical to our measures.

Having

Having thus given a concise view of the origin and progress of the inquiry concerning the smuggling of English wool, down to the present time, I will now proceed to offer some arguments for the propriety of an application to Parliament.

The question naturally divides itself into two branches.

The first is,

Whether the practice of smuggling wool is carried on to any considerable extent?

The second,

Whether the laws now in force are sufficient to prevent that pernicious practice?

These two points I shall consider distinctly.

The

The evidence delivered to the Committee of the House of Commons, was deemed amply sufficient on which to ground a report, though a part only of what might have been given was then produced.

I am, however, now in possession of much more ample information; the force of which no art or sophistry can evade.

The liberal subscription which was entered into immediately on the formation of the general meeting in London, has enabled me to employ persons capable of procuring intelligence; and I have spared no pains or expence in order to furnish myself with such materials as, from their solidity, I doubt not, are capable of combating all opposition to this proposition—that British wool is smuggled in great quantities.

The information which, by the concurrence of singular events, has been obtained from the Continent, exceeds my most sanguine expectations: but prudence will not permit me to give your Lordship, or the public, a detail of the information which has been already obtained, as it might prevent my procuring that which I have reason further to expect.

It is not accounts of a few solitary bags of wool conveyed to the Continent by the smugglers, as a return for brandy brought from thence, or even of casual cargoes of more consequence occasionally sent to France, which make up the sum of my information; but I have been able to procure the most satisfactory evidence, that a regular trade in that article has been carried on to an amount
beyond

beyond what even the manufacturers themselves had any idea of.

Every step I advance in this inquiry leads to more important discoveries; and I have no doubt of being able to lay before Parliament such evidence as will surprize those who now vaunt, that the manufacturers have raised a clamour about a thing which either hath no existence, or at most is of very trifling consequence. I will only add, my Lord, under this head, that prosecutions are now carrying on against several persons for smuggling this article: and were not the undertaking too extensive for the Committee, prosecutions might also be commenced against many other persons in different parts of the kingdom.

It now remains to be considered,

Whether the present laws are sufficient to prevent such fraudulent practices, in case they were properly executed?

In order to point out clearly the defects in the wool laws now in force, it is necessary that they should be distinctly reviewed; but I cannot expect either your Lordship, or the public at large, to attend to such a laborious investigation. I shall therefore content myself with taking notice of some of the prominent features, which are most easily delineated.

Of the laws now in force to prevent the exportation of wool, some are general, binding upon all parts of the kingdom within a certain distance from the sea; others are particularly

particularly binding only upon the counties of Kent and Suffex.

The former of these oblige “ Every grower
 “ of wool residing within five miles of the
 “ sea, before he carries his wool home from
 “ the place of shearing, to give notice ten days
 “ after shearing, to the next officer of the
 “ customs, of the true number of his fleeces,
 “ and where it is housed, and not to remove
 “ the same without certifying to the said of-
 “ ficer under his hand his intention so to do
 “ three days before.” As there is no further
 controul over the wool, it is very easy to
 consign it into the hands of the smuggler,
 and therefore in this respect the law is inef-
 fectual*.

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Many

* The above clause, though meant by the legislature to be general, is only incidentally mentioned, agreeable to the loose manner in which many of the acts are drawn; and I am inclined to believe that in some counties it is not attended to,

Many of the acts are also so vaguely expressed, and the clauses of them so very unconnected, that it is frequently hardly possible to trace their real meaning.

The local laws are also defective, though not in so great a degree; the design of them is to oblige every grower of wool, in the districts to which they extend, “ To give an account in writing, in three days after shearing, of his number of fleeces, and where lodged, to the next custom-house officer; and the like notice, before he removes any part thereof, of the number of fleeces and the weight, and the name and abode of the person to whom it is disposed, and the place where intended to be carried, and shall take a certificate from the officer who first entered the same, (paying six-pence) on
pain

“ pain of forfeiting the wool; and also Three
 “ Shillings for every pound thereof, as if it
 “ had been actually exported.”

So far they are calculated to answer the end proposed; but having no clause requiring a return of the certificate, and an acknowledgment from the purchaser, of his having received the wool, the intention of the legislature is defeated; it being very possible (and which can be confirmed by evidence) to convey wool out of the kingdom, and at the same time to comply with the letter of the law.

One of the clauses in this act is likewise so absurd, that it is absolutely necessary, for the benefit of the trade, that the wool-dealer should risk the forfeiture of the bond
 which

which the law requires him to give, rather than comply with so injudicious a restriction.*

There are also defects in the laws for regulating the conveyance of wool coastwise. There is no controul over wool which is found lying on the common wharfs, from whence it may be easily conveyed on board vessels bound to foreign parts, without any probability of detection. All wool, when it comes within the limits of a port, ceases to be under the controul of the officers of the customs; in consequence of which, wool that

* By the clause in the act of the 9th and 10th of William, chap. 40, §. 3. "No person within 15 miles of the sea, in the counties of Kent and Suffex, shall buy any wool before he enters into bond, with sureties, that all the wool he shall buy shall not be sold by him to any person within 15 miles of the sea." By this clause, every wool-dealer within the register in the said counties is absolutely prohibited from selling his wool to any person in Yorkshire, or any other county, who resides within 15 miles of the sea.

is brought from the country, and deposited at Gravesend, (which is within the port of London) may pass without any certificate; it is of course very easy to convey wool from thence on board vessels (lying within the port of London) ready to transport the same to foreign countries.

To remedy these defects, and also to abolish injudicious restrictions, is the end of the intended bill; and this end it proposes to attain, by extending the laws, at present binding only on the counties of Kent and Suffex, to all parts of the kingdom, within a limited distance from the sea, but with such alterations and enlargements, as will give them that effect and energy of which they are at present destitute, and by suggesting such regulations in other cases as may appear necessary.

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To complet a plan of such an extensive nature, and in which so many interests are involved, without experiencing opposition, is hardly to be expected; but it was the endeavour of the Committee, in drawing up the heads of the bill, to effect the end designed in a manner the least oppressive to the parties concerned.

The opponents of the bill have asked,
 “ How the manufacturers can act so absurd-
 “ ly, as to demand an extension of the laws
 “ which now subsist in the counties of Kent
 “ and Suffex, when it is supposed, that the
 “ greatest quantities of wool are smuggled
 “ from these parts?”

In reply to this, the fact is not substantiated, that the greatest quantities are smuggled
 from

from these two counties; on the contrary, it will appear that larger quantities are smuggled from other parts of the kingdom, where no such regulations exist. But owing to the register in the above counties, the quantity of wool grown within a certain distance of the sea is more accurately known; and from hence it may be determined, with much greater certainty than in other parts, how much wool is taken off by the smugglers. The question put by our opponents supposes, that these laws, instead of restraining the practice of smuggling, are an actual encouragement of it: this, however, is not the case: they are, as designed to prevent smuggling, good in their principle; but this principle not being sufficiently extended, the end proposed by the Legislature is not fully answered.

There

There is one part of the bill, which may be more violently opposed than even all the regulations for preventing the exportation of wool; I mean that which relates to the false winding of the article.

The law now in being for the regulation of winding or making up the fleece of wool, passed so long ago as the reign of Henry the VIIIth; and from the difference in the value of money between that and the present period, the penalty which was then enacted for the breach of the law is *now* so trifling, that it is scarcely worth any person's trouble to commence a prosecution for damages, except at common law.

The necessity of more ample provision for the security of the wool-dealer, in this instance,

stance, is therefore universally confessed, and will be fully ascertained by evidence when demanded. How far it may be possible to prevent all the ill consequences which follow from the present mode of marking the sheep, and from the shameful manner of making up the wool, it is impossible to determine; but the importance of these objects may be seen by referring to the journals of the House of Commons.

I have now, I hope, fully explained the two positions previously advanced, in as concise a manner as the nature of the subject will admit.

The legislature has already determined on the necessity of preventing the exportation of wool; and the manufacturers only wish
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for such additions and amendments to the present laws, as appear necessary to effect the design proposed by them.

To affirm that the bill is entirely free from defects, would be the most unwarrantable vanity on the part of the manufacturers; and had its opponents conducted themselves with candour, this appeal would have been unnecessary; but every method has been tried, which ingenuity could devise, to render the promoters of the bill obnoxious to the Landowners; and it is become absolutely necessary, that the manufacturers should vindicate themselves from those aspersions which have been so wantonly thrown on their principles and conduct.

It is, indeed, one of the maxims of the great *Sir Josiah Child*, "that a merchant (as a

merchant) is incapable of having just views of commerce, where his interest is concerned." Though I am persuaded that this, like other general rules, is not without its exceptions, yet I will not at present set myself to oppose it, but will freely acknowledge the absolute necessity of the Legislature's guarding, with the greatest circumspection, against hastily adopting proposals for new regulations, either from manufacturers or from any other persons.

A manufacturer may probably affix too great a degree of criminality to the exportation of wool; nor is it proper that the merits of the question should be decided by those alone, whose interest is supposed to be immediately concerned. But whatever errors an attention to our own interests may have occasioned,

occasioned, we may safely trust for the removal of them to the wisdom of Parliament, who, being free from prejudice in favour of any particular class of men, will be able to judge with impartiality, and to decide in a manner the best adapted to promote the public welfare.

For my own part, I have ever considered the subject as of national importance, and unworthy of attention in any other point of view; and though I am anxiously desirous of interesting your Lordship in the cause of the manufacturers, so far as it shall appear to be consistent with the public good, yet I will not attempt to impose on your judgment by any arguments, except such as appear to myself to be founded in truth.

Our opponents will attempt to blend the consideration of the hardship which they may suppose the wool-grower to labour under from the prohibition of exporting wool, with the objects of the present enquiry; but for the credit of the manufacturers, I hope your Lordship will clearly discern the propriety of keeping these things separate and distinct. Nothing more is required of the manufacturers, than to prove the present laws ineffectual, and to demonstrate the existence of the smuggling of wool to a considerable extent.

If these two positions shall appear properly supported, the manufacturers will fully prove their public assertions; and are, therefore, justified in their application for an amendment of the present laws.

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I am very far from blaming a wool-grower in Lincolnshire, or in any other part of the kingdom, for endeavouring to obtain the privilege of exporting wool, provided it can be demonstrated to be of no national disadvantage; but, in the present circumstance, the manufacturers are not called upon to combat this opinion; and without the least imputation of declining the contest, for want of ability to support it, they would be fully justified in taking that for granted which Parliament by its prohibitory acts has fully established, viz. that *the exportation of wool is detrimental to the nation*.——I will, however, hazard a few observations on this delicate subject.

The best author, who has professedly treated on the expediency of exporting British wool, is Mr. *Smith*, in his *History of Wool*.

I have

I have read this performance with much satisfaction, and I admire the impartiality which pervades the greater part of this author's works. There is one material point, however, in which he is defective; and every succeeding writer on the subject is liable to be charged with the same defect.

The wool of this kingdom may be considered under two grand divisions, which are well known by the appellation of Combing Wool and Clothing Wool; and tho' there is a great variety of sorts, which may be classed under each division, yet they are essentially different. But this distinction is by no means accurately observed by Mr. *Smith*, or by any other author who has treated on this subject. —I will readily grant, that many things which have been advanced by some injudi-

cious authors, on the absolute necessity of our wool to the manufacturers of France, are destitute of foundation; and that it is not true, what has been frequently advanced as a fact, “ That the French can neither make
 “ their superfine cloth from Spanish Wool,
 “ nor *any* of the inferior sorts from their
 “ own, without a mixture of English wool.” But it does not from hence follow, that some kinds of our wool are not essential to the proper manufacturing of particular fabricks, in which they endeavour to rival this kingdom.

It has been my grand object, through the progress of this inquiry, to obtain the most authentic information of the uses to which the French apply the wool of this country, and to ascertain the true reason why they are induced to give such a price for it as may compensate the smuggler for his risk.

From a variety of intelligence which I have received, I am now fully convinced, that our combing wool in particular is absolutely necessary in some of the French manufactures, and that, without it, they cannot manufacture some species of goods in imitation of the English fabrick.

As the price of labour in many of the provinces of that kingdom is undoubtedly lower than in England,* this advantage will in a great measure compensate for the extra price which they are obliged to pay for English wool. And as the proportion of

* From the best information which I can obtain, the rate of wages in the woollen manufacture of France is not materially different from what it is in England, particularly in the article of superfine cloth; but in those places where the coarser goods are made, the wages of the manufacturers are lower. The difference, however, is by no means so material as to warrant the conclusions which have been drawn from it by the opposers of the Commercial Treaty with France.

labour to the price of the raw materials, in some of the lighter fabricks in which combing wool is employed, is very considerable; a very small difference in the price of labour, thro' the different stages of manufacturing a piece of goods, will compensate for the advance on the raw materials from which it is made.

If, therefore, our own manufacturers can consume all the wool of the kingdom, of that kind which is so necessary to the French, it appears incompatible with sound policy to permit its exportation.

In making up an assortment of goods for a foreign market, it is often absolutely necessary to comprise a variety of manufactures; and the want of those goods to the French, which are made either intirely or in part from
English

English wool, must be a considerable disadvantage in their foreign trade. If they cannot make them, by being precluded from obtaining our wool, they must of necessity purchase them from this country; and no person the least conversant in commercial affairs will pretend to deny, that it is much more for the interest of the kingdom to export a manufactured article, than the raw materials of which it is composed.

These remarks are confined entirely to the article of combing wool; but the apparent probability of an extensive commercial intercourse with France, having introduced to my acquaintance some very eminent woollen-drapers, natives of that kingdom, who have come to England for the purpose of settling a correspondence with the British
 manu-

manufacturers; I have availed myself of this favourable opportunity to procure every possible information on the article of wool; and from the conversation I have had with them on this subject, I am fully convinced, that some kinds of our clothing wool are very necessary in making the French fabricks of the inferior qualities, denominated in England second or livery cloths; and that probably no other kind of wool, which can be obtained by the manufacturers of France, is a proper substitute in the manufacturing of such goods.

I am well informed, that during the war, when the introduction of British wool to France was attended with particular difficulty, the manufacturers of Sedan made but little cloth; but that since the peace, the trade in that place has much increased, from the
 facility

facility with which our wool is now procured. One of the persons with whom I had particular conversation on this subject, and who is a very intelligent man, did not hesitate to declare, that if we could keep our wool from being sent to France, we must have an undoubted advantage over their manufactures in the woollen branch from the commercial treaty.

From hence appears the necessity of an act which may be *effectual* for keeping our own wool within the kingdom;* for, by having this valuable article in much greater abundance and

* I beg it may be observed, that I am not setting myself directly to prove the necessity of prohibiting the exportation of wool, on general principles, which would require a more comprehensive view of the subject than I chuse now to take of it; and that where I advance any argument of my own, it is on the supposition of the manufacturers being able to consume the wool of the kingdom; as I am no advocate for depressing the value of wool beyond a fair average price, merely that the manufacturer may purchase it at a very low rate; which, as I shall note in the progress

and variety than the French, our manufacturers may perhaps, more than by any other means, be able to support a competition with the manufacturers of that nation.

DoctOR A. SMITH, in his work intitlED, “ An inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations,” has assertED, “ that the price of wool has fallen very considerably since the reign of Edward IIID ;” and he has attributed the cause of this degradation, in the value of that article, to the effects of violence and artifice.

First; To what he calls the absurd prohibition of exporting wool from England.

progrESS of this publication, does not appear to be any lasting advantage to himself. I do not however mean, that the low price of wool for a short period of time, and which may be produced by circumstances affecting all concerns in general, is to be considered as a good reason in itself (and abstracted from all other considerations) for permitting the exportation of the article.

2dly; To the permission of importing Spanish wool, duty free. And,

3dly; To the prohibition of exporting wool from Ireland to any other part, except to England alone.

That learned author also states, that there are many authentic records which demonstrate, that during the reign of the above prince, a tod of English wool of 28lb. was worth thirty shillings of our present money; but that, in the present times, twenty-one shillings may be reckoned a *very good* price for *very good* English wool.

This statement is certainly erroneous. For in the year 1776, when Dr. *Smith's* publication first appeared, the price of a tod of Wiltshire wool was from twenty to twenty-

two

two shillings; and the wool of this county can be esteemed only in the third class of English clothing wool; not only the counties of Hereford, Salop, and Suffex, (in which the finest wool is produced in any considerable quantities) but also Surry, Dorset, Somersset, and several others, being confessedly superior.—From this statement, therefore, it appears that 21s. per tod was by no means *a very good* price for very good English wool, at the time when the Doctor published his work.

The argument will, however, appear much stronger at the present time. Wiltshire wool sold last year at much the same price as the preceding year, which was from twenty-eight to thirty shillings per tod; and all the clothing wool in the kingdom is advanced proportionably in value.

A tod

A tod of fine Herefordshire wool was sold in the year 1785, from *forty to forty-two shillings*, and it sunk in value but very little at the last fairs, after shearing.

In the course of my examination of the merits of the Irish propositions, I found, in some of the official papers which were transmitted to me, an average price of the wool of England for several years, which appearing to me very erroneous, I endeavoured to obtain information how it was fixed, but could by no means meet with proper satisfaction. Indeed it is almost impossible for any writer, from theory alone, to state with accuracy the average prices of English wool. — Though the present price of English wool much exceeds what it was some years since, yet possibly a fair average at the present instant

stant might not exceed an average made at a more distant period. The fact is, that the coarser wools now bear a much greater proportion to the finer sorts, than they did ten or twelve years ago; which is owing to the present improved system of agriculture, and the introduction of a larger breed of sheep.—Allowing, therefore, that the arguments which the Doctor produces, in order to prove that the real price of wool in the reign of Edward the III^d. was still superior to the nominal price, yet he will fail in his proof of the degradation *in value* of that article in the present times.

That the wool of England has suffered a degradation *in point of quality*, even within seventeen or eighteen years past,* no person

* My own experience does not enable me to speak of a more distant period; but from the testimony of other persons, I am convinced of its having suffered, in point of quality, more than I am sensible of myself.

at all acquainted with the subject will pretend to deny, though the price has so much advanced in general.

There is no good ground to suppose, that the introduction of Spanish wool into this kingdom tends to lessen the value of our own production. The importations from Spain cannot possibly affect any other than English wool of the first quality, (except it should be allowed that some of the inferior sorts of Spanish wool are cheaper than our own of a similar quality, which, if true, will certainly militate strongly against the arguments of other persons who have written on this subject:) and indeed the manufacturers of this kingdom will agree in asserting the direct contrary of the above position, fine English wool, except under some particular circumstances,

stances, having always risen in value in proportion to the rise on Spanish wool, notwithstanding the imports from Spain in that commodity have been nearly doubled within the last fifty years; nor has English clothing wool of the inferior qualities been diminished, but on the contrary, has advanced in value during the above period.

The competition of the wool of Ireland with that of England, in our market, is scarcely worth noticing; the quantity of wool grown in Ireland is very far from being considerable, and the imports from thence have been constantly declining for many years past; which may be owing in part to the Irish having turned their attention to the breeding of large cattle, since the impolitic act of Charles the II^d was repealed, by which
they

they were restricted from exporting their live cattle to this kingdom, and also from the privilege which the Irish now enjoy (of which no liberal mind will envy them) of exporting their woollen manufactures to other markets besides that of England.

The reputation which Doctor *Smith's* publications have justly obtained, naturally give weight to his opinions on every subject which hath fallen under his discussion; but the learned author cannot with propriety be offended with these observations from a person whom a considerable interest, as well as some experience, in the woollen manufactures of England, has rendered capable of forming a tolerably competent judgment of those things which immediately relate to the business in which he is engaged.

On this account, I have been induced to throw out these remarks on what the above author hath advanced on the article of wool, which are not founded on inferences drawn from theoretical reasoning, but on an appeal to facts; which, in treating a subject like the present, ought alone to have weight.

As I do not pretend to treat this subject otherwise than in a cursory manner, it is not necessary for me to note the observations on the expediency of an exportation of British wool, which have been advanced by *every writer* who has occasionally delivered his sentiments on it.

There is nothing materially different in the remarks of *Lord Kames* from those of *Dr. A. Smith*, except in one particular, which
I have

I have noticed at the end of my observations on *Sir John Dalrymple's* pamphlet in favour of exporting our wool, which was published when the Lincolnshire petition was presented, and which was answered by Dr. *Foster*.— Whether that answer be sufficiently satisfactory, is not necessary for me to prove, as I do not by any means intend making myself a party in the cause; my design being only to note those defects which are apparent in the advocates for the measure; I will only just observe, that *Sir John Dalrymple* states,

“ That he had examined *every* flock of sheep
 “ and magazine of wool in Portugal, Spain,
 “ and France, that lay within his reach; and
 “ that he can with certainty declare, that
 “ *every species* of wool is to be found in Spain
 “ and Portugal, except the *long wool* of Lin-
 “ colnshire. In Languedoc, he observes, are

“ the short wools of the west and south coasts
 “ of England, and the long wools of Lin-
 “ colnshire, *in perfection.*”

Allowing the facts to be truly stated, it may be very naturally asked *in what quantity* is the Lincolnshire wool found in Languedoc? as he only mentions this particular province, and allows that there is none of the kind in Spain or Portugal.

For my part I am clearly convinced, from experience, that the fine and middling wools of England, in contradiction to what must be inferred from the general reasoning in *Mr. Smith's History of Wool*, are equally high in price with the wools of Spain and Portugal, that bear any resemblance to them. If the French, therefore, have the *combing wool*, and
 the

the *lower kinds* of wool in plenty, similar to the growth of England, why are they induced to give such prices as are sufficient to answer the risk which the smuggler runs in procuring them from England?

I have assigned *my reasons* for this in the beginning of these observations; and, if any others can be adduced, I shall be glad to have them pointed out, as the investigation of truth is my only object.

Sir John asks, “ Why allow the exportation of wheat, and prohibit the exportation of wool?” when it shall be proved that the French can be supplied, either by an increase of their own growth, or from other countries, with combing wool similar to that of England; and also with the lower

kinds of clothing wool, properly adapted for making the sort of goods, which I have mentioned above; it will be soon enough to answer this question.

Dean *Tucker's* reflections on the low price of wools, published in 1782, will not in general be objected to by a candid manufacturer; but, on his *own ground*, there can be now no reason for permitting the exportation of wool; as he acknowledges, “ that the overflowings
 “ of the home market, after the natives have
 “ been supplied, should alone be exported.” I believe it will not be proved that there is at present any want of demand for the low wools of England; the flourishing state of the Baize trade, and the large consumption of coarse wool for the *Carpet Manufactory*, must prevent any quantity from remaining
 long

long in hand. At this instant I am also informed, that the manufacturers of Witney in Oxfordshire are very much in want of coarse wool, which is also the case at Kidderminster in Worcestershire.

I have lately heard with pleasure, from a friend of mine who resided some time in Constantinople, that by accident the article of Shalloons has been introduced into Turkey, and that the consumption was likely to be considerable, which must eventually be advantageous to the growers of combing wool.

The Dean has proposed a scheme similar to one which may be seen in *Smith's* history of wool, viz. “ To allow the exportation of
 “ wool under a certain duty, and the monies
 “ arising from the duty to be applied as a
 “ bounty

“ bounty on the exportation of woollens.”
 He observes, “ That this regulation would,
 “ like a two-edged sword, act both ways.
 “ The more wool was exported, the greater
 “ would be the reward to be given for ex-
 “ porting our own manufactures made out of
 “ the same kind of wool; so that the evil, (so
 “ much dreaded, or apprehended) viz. the
 “ exportation of the raw material, would
 “ operate as a premium in favour of the
 “ English manufacturer at a foreign market.”
 —This proposal is certainly liberal; but I
 must confess, that neither the *concise argu-*
ments of the *Dean*, or the *more dilated ones* of
Mr. Smith, in its favour, have convinced me
 of its propriety.

Mr. Smith asserts, that the wool-grower is
 intitled to have a better price for his wool;
 and

and that the consequence of his proposal being carried into effect, would be an advance upon this article. Whatever necessity might be pleaded for such a measure when he wrote, I hope I shall not be deemed an enemy to the wool-grower, if I assert that at present it no longer exists; since not only the wool, but also the carcase of the sheep, is so much increased in value.

But I should be glad to know, if the foreign manufacturers can purchase our wool, burdened with this duty and the charges of shipping it, and manufacture it for their own and other markets abroad, how the British manufacturer is to be benefited by the bounty? He can only derive advantage from it, by being able to supply the foreign market; but from this he will be utterly excluded, if the
foreign

foreign manufacturer, either from *the low price of labour*, or from *whatever other cause*, is able to supply it himself to greater advantage.

Either our wool would *not be exported* under the proposed duty; or else, *if exported*, the export of manufactured goods would decrease in proportion to the quantity of the raw materials sent out of the kingdom. I do not see how this argument can be refuted, except it shall be said, that the wool, thus exported, will serve only to supply those foreign markets to which we have *no access*. But this appears to be a conclusion, which it is not possible to support.

If, therefore, I am not deceived in the justness of the inference which I have drawn, the proposal can only be classed among those
which

which have a specious appearance in theory; but which, when reduced to practice, vanish like “the baseless fabric of a vision.”

Though I am sorry to observe, that the *Dean* has in some measure adopted the language which is so very fashionable respecting the monopolizing spirit of the manufacturers, and with which even the ingenuous and candid *Smith* was strongly tinctured, yet he deserves the thanks of the wool-grower as well as the manufacturer, (who is also indebted to him on many other accounts) for suggesting another plan, which, if encouraged, might tend to the increase of the woollen manufacture.

It does not appear very consistent with liberality of sentiment, to declaim against the
monopolizing

monopolizing spirit of the manufacturers, when it must be confessed that the charge is equally applicable to other classes of men as well as to them.

Is there more enlargedness of mind discoverable in those countries, where trade and commerce are despised by the haughty tyrant of an extensive but impoverished domain, exerting the feudal spirit over a wretched peasantry, than in this kingdom, where trade and commerce, cherished and protected by an enlightened legislature, dispense their blessings to all ranks and conditions of men?

The prejudiced and uninformed manufacturer may indeed not hesitate to declare, that it is of no consequence to him how low the wool of this country sinks in value,

as

as it will enable him to go to market on better terms; and also be one mean of bringing the gentlemen of landed property nearer to his own level, by diminishing the value of their estates. On the contrary, the proud and bigotted land-owner may look down with contempt on the merchant or manufacturer, and foolishly suppose, that he can derive neither profit nor advantage from any sort of connexion with them; and that every approach to a union tends only to debase his own dignity.

But the truly enlightened person, how exalted soever his rank may be, will never experience any degradation from a proper association with those who are capable of affording him information, on points with which, from the nature of his education, he
cannot

cannot be supposed to be conversant; and he will feel no envy at the increase of the trade and commerce of the kingdom; while, on the other hand, the merchant or manufacturer, whose views are extended beyond his counting-house or workshop, will, without any prostitution of character to *mere rank* and fortune, place a just value on the connection, and will view with pleasure the improvement of landed estates, enabled by such improvement to support those accumulated loads under which they at present labour.

That self-interest is still too prevalent among the generality of manufacturers, as well as mere land-owners, cannot be disputed; but instead of fostering prejudices between the landed and manufacturing interest, it
 would

would be much more patriotic to point out the errors of each, and to evince the necessity of a cordial union.

Any reply to what has been again advanced by the author of the *Annals of Agriculture*, on the wool bill, in his 37th number, cannot be expected from me.

Till *Mr. Young* has either proved the assertions which he so confidently threw out in his 36th number of the *Annals of Agriculture*, or has candour enough to retract them; I am confident that, without being liable to the imputation either of vanity or arrogance, I may not only disregard the unwarrantable allusions, but that I may also pass by unnoticed the arguments of a person who appears in the present instance to be
under

under the influence of prejudice in such a degree, that it is scarcely possible for him to have that regard to truth which is so essential to an impartial investigation of the subject which he professes to discuss.*

Nothing can be more contrary to liberality of sentiment, than after having pointed out a person by discriminating marks, which no one could mistake, to affect an air of superiority, merely because that person had spirit enough to repel the attack on his own account, and in behalf of the manufacturers in general: but in vain does the author of the *Annals* endeavour to conceal his inability to prove what he had advanced, by amusing

* It is necessary to observe, that Mr. *Young* had asserted it to be the design of the framers of the bill to obstruct the conveyance of wool to the North; and that I publicly challenged him to prove this assertion.

his readers with observations and remarks totally foreign to the subject.

There are some persons, my Lord, with whom the ingenuous and liberal-minded man can with difficulty be at variance; and whose errors and mistakes he would, if consistent with a just regard to truth, suppress, rather than expose.

I can truly say that this is the case with me, in respect to the author of the Annals of Agriculture. Being each of us members of the Agriculture Society at Bath, it is natural to suppose, that an author, who has written so much on husbandry affairs, could not in his literary character be unknown to me; and our late worthy Secretary had excited in my mind a desire of being personally

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acquainted

acquainted with the author, as, in his opinion, we should be mutually pleased with each other's conversation.

I must confess therefore, that when I first saw the 36th number of the Annals of Agriculture, I was really mortified, not on account of the author's disapprobation of the bill, and his entertaining an opinion contrary to that which had been given by the manufacturers, (which would have given me no offence) but merely from the illiberal spirit which was discovered in the publication, and the gross calumny thrown on the framers of the bill, founded only in giving credit to those falsehoods which had been so industriously propagated.

I shall, my Lord, leave my readers either to condemn or acquit me for the publication

of my Card address'd to the author, after they have perused his first attack in the 36th number of the Annals; only just observing, that not one of the Committee knew any thing of my card, till it had been sent to the Secretary in London for publication; though the author of the Annals, having asserted that the manufacturers assembled merely to raise subscriptions in order to publish abusive advertisements against him, has assumed to himself the merit of being persecuted by *a meeting*,* which never had any existence but in his own fertile imagination.

Though I have declined myself replying to his observations, yet his misrepresentations

* I positively declare that no meeting has been held since Mr. *Young's* first publication; and that, to the best of my knowledge, his name was never mentioned at any of our meetings.

and false conclusions have been well exposed, by one of our committee, in the Norwich Chronicle.

I must beg permission to notice what appears to me very singular conduct in a *noble author*.† His Lordship, in his book entitled “Observations on the Commerce of the American States,” in pages 7, 8, &c. has made some remarks on the woollen trade of England and France, and points out the superiority of the woollen manufacture of this country over that of France, particularly in the article of middling and coarse cloths; and by comparing the quality of the wool which grows in this country with that of France, proves that the French are desirous of obtaining our wool. Though his Lordship is

† Lord Sheffield.

mistaken

mistaken in some points relative to the subject; yet it is a satisfaction to observe in his work a full confirmation of my own opinion, respecting the wool and the woollen manufacture of France.

In a note under page 8, are the following remarks:—

“ Several persons are now in England, sent
 “ from France to observe the management of
 “ our flocks, in order to acquire knowledge
 “ relative to wool. They may observe, that
 “ it will be necessary to change the climate
 “ and whole system of husbandry in France,
 “ before that country can raise any quantity
 “ of wool such as ours.” How does this
 agree with *Sir John Dalrymple's* account mentioned above?

His Lordship goes on to observe: “ The
 “ quantity of wool raised in France is *not*
 “ *considerable*, when compared with the con-
 “ sumption. We may in some degree judge,
 “ from the seizures, of *the increase of the*
 “ *practice of smuggling wool*. In 1770, the
 “ quantity seized was only 32 pounds. In
 “ 1780, it had increased to 12383 pounds;
 “ and in 1782, it amounted to 13916 pounds”

By this mode of arguing, (which must be
 confessed by every impartial person to be not
 destitute of force) I can prove the still greater
 increase of the practice; as in the years 1783
 and 1784 the quantities seized were much
 larger; but waving this, I wish to know how
 his Lordship can reconcile the sentiments
 just quoted, which were given to the public
 in the year 1784, with that determined op-
 position

position manifested by him at the county meeting held some time since at Lewes in Suffex, against a bill which is designed to check the practice of smuggling a necessary commodity into a kingdom acknowledged to be a powerful rival, and the quality of whose wool is confessed by his Lordship to be *much inferior* to our own.

His Lordship may, perhaps, alledge in his justification, that though he is an enemy to the smuggling of wool, yet the regulations proposed are so injurious to the land-owners, wool-growers, &c. that the remedy proposed will be worse than the disease; but before he adduces this plea, let him fairly examine the intended bill, and compare it with the present laws. This I am pretty confident his Lordship had not done when he delivered his
 sentiments

sentiments at Lewes; as he was repeatedly informed by the Secretary of the wool meeting, who attended there, that some of the clauses, to which his Lordship objected, were merely copied from the present laws. Had he taken any pains to examine the bill, he never would have hazarded the assertion, “ That if the bill passed in its present form, “ no master of a vessel would ever be found “ willing to carry wool coastwise.”

From what has been before observed, it is unnecessary for me to notice what his Lordship was pleased to say respecting the plan proposed by the framers of the bill, of restricting, as much as possible, the conveyance of wool to the North, through envy and jealousy against the manufacturers in that part of the kingdom.

I have,

I have, however, omitted to notice what is a complete answer to this assertion, viz. That several respectable wool-dealers in London were on the committee, and gave constant attendance at the meeting, whose connexions in the West are trifling indeed, when compared with those which they have in the North. If, therefore, any such design had been formed, they would not have acted wisely in assenting to regulations, designed to check and controul their principal trade.

Before his Lordship again declaims on the declining manufactures of the West, I would wish him to be better acquainted with the actual state of the trade in those parts. Though, from several favourable circumstances, the manufacturers of the North have acquired a considerable part of
the

the coarse trade of those counties, yet within fifty years past the annual consumption of Spanish wool, in this kingdom, has increased from six thousand bags to between eleven and twelve thousand; and the far greater part of this is consumed in the counties of Wilts, Gloucester, and Somerset.

It may be necessary also to inform his Lordship, that a spirit of invention, as it respects new fabricks, has for many years been prevalent in the *Western Counties*; and to this cause must principally be ascribed *that predilection for English woollen manufactures, which for some time past has been so conspicuous in the French nation.**

* I do not mean to insinuate, that if it had not been for the introduction of fancy articles into France, our inferior sorts of woollens would not in consequence of the Commercial Treaty have found their way into that kingdom; but only that the circumstance alluded to has, with other causes; excited a desire of being supplied with English cloths.

This

This introduction of new fabricks, which had their origin in the West, has been of the greatest service to the manufacturers of the North. Though the different sorts of fancy goods manufactured in the Northern counties, principally from English wool, now form a considerable branch of their trade; yet I believe I shall run no hazard in challenging his Lordship to produce any one fabrick of Northern manufacture that was not copied from the finer sorts made in the Western counties.

I assure his Lordship, that so far from envying the flourishing state of the manufactures in the North, I really rejoice at their extension, considered in a national point of view. The industry and frugality of the lower manufacturers, joined to a very great
attention

attention in making their goods, and aided by the assistance of machines, have enabled them to furnish their extensive cloth-halls with an ample supply of fabricks. Hence the wholesale dealer can, without delay, supply the orders which, by the medium of his agents, he is constantly receiving from different parts of the kingdom: and from hence also, the merchant can make his assortment for the German, Portugal, and other markets, without being obliged to give his orders to the manufacturers, except in some particular cases.

These flourishing manufactories have undoubtedly added to the wealth of the kingdom; and on this account the noble author would have been justified in holding them out to publick view, as objects of real consequence,

sequence, which ought not to be cramped by the narrow views of any set of men whatever. If, after a fair examination, such a design had been discovered in the promoters of the wool bill, they would have deserved the indignation not only of *his Lordship*, but of the nation at large.

If the manufacturers of the West were implicitly to adopt all the principles upon which the trade is carried on in the North, they would undoubtedly deprive themselves of some particular advantage which they at present enjoy; yet I acknowledge the propriety of the general plan of manufacture which prevails in those parts, and am convinced that, under certain regulations, it might be introduced into the counties of Wilts, Gloucester, &c. not only with safety, but even with advantage.

Till

Till something of this kind is done, in vain do the Western manufacturers attribute all the benefits enjoyed by their Northern rivals, in the manufacture of cloths from English wool, to the introduction of machines for facilitating labour. Advantages are undoubtedly derived from these machines; and as they will by degrees more generally prevail in the West, it is not improbable but that their use may in course of time effect the alteration, which in the inferior manufactures is so necessary to their perfection.

In the North, the *interest* of the small manufacturer is *immediately concerned* in preventing every possible waste in the making of his goods; and when his cloths are milled, he is able to dispose of them without loss of time in the public halls of Leeds or Halifax, where

where the merchant or wholesale manufacturer can at any time supply himself with such goods as he may want. Nothing more is requisite from the merchant, than sending the cloths to a public dresser, or finishing them himself; and in consequence of this mode of purchasing, he is under no necessity of keeping a large stock. On the contrary, the Clothier in the West is obliged to go through all the process of manufacturing, by the medium of persons who, so far from *consulting his interest*, are too generally disposed to purloin and embezzle his property; and is obliged to employ a large capital for producing, comparatively speaking, a small quantity of goods; and, instead of having an open market from whence he might supply himself, must depend on his own stock alone for executing his orders.

Though

Though these inconveniences are inseparable from some branches of the manufacture, particularly the fancy trade, yet there are others in which the happiness of the work-people would be promoted, by placing them in a situation in which their *own interest* would be *immediately concerned* in reducing the price of goods; and this would put the principal manufacturers of the West on a nearer equality with those of the North.*

As nothing but a sincere desire of promoting the general good could have drawn from me these reflections on the present state of the woollen manufacture in my own and the adjoining counties, they will, I hope, meet

* Though I have freely commented on the conduct of the noble author, which appears to have proceeded from want of sufficient information, yet I am not insensible to the merit of his Lordship's publications, as I have received pleasure and information by a perusal of them.

with your Lordship's indulgence, though they may probably be deemed foreign to the subject of which I am treating.

I have seen a small pamphlet lately published, intitled "Observations on the Wool Bill." Though the author has adopted the same argument that is above refuted, and in other respects, by aggravating trifling errors, has endeavoured to charge the promoters of the bill with want of capacity, yet I am ready to acknowledge, that he has pointed out some errors in the bill, and has manifested a competent acquaintance with the present laws; but I beg leave to assure him, that his principal objections would have been obviated without his assistance, from my own remarks, aided by those that may be made in the committee, when assembled. I wish this

writer possessed more candour, than to have made the following remark, that it was the design of the manufacturers, “to effect that
 “by stratagem which they were afraid to
 “declare openly.”

He observes, p. 9, “That in the new
 “clause beginning p. 15, it is to be enacted,
 “that every dealer within miles of the
 “sea shall give an account of the wool in
 “his hands; but when the important and
 “alarming part of the clause, viz. the regu-
 “lation, &c. comes forward, the limit or
 “distance from the sea is left out, doubtless
 “with the hope that the omission might pass
 “unobserved, and that the reader might be
 “led to imagine, that the first mention of
 “the limit would extend to the whole clause.”
 He had before insinuated that it was the in-
 tion

tention of the framer of the bill, “ to include
 “ the wool-dealer generally in all parts of the
 “ kingdom.”

I must inform this writer, that no part of the bill is founded on artifice; for the proposers of it are not such idiots, as to suppose it possible, in a matter of this importance, to elude, not only the vigilance of Parliament, but also of every person concerned to oppose the bill. The fact is, it is a mere omission, nor did the general meeting ever once intend to include any wool-dealer, in the regulations, who does not reside within miles from the sea. Whether the limit is to extend, in this respect, as far as fifteen miles from the sea, is not yet fixed.

The resolution of the Exeter Meeting, to which he alludes, was never adopted by the

general meeting; nor was it ever designed to be brought forward. From the account I have already given of the rise and progress of the bill, it appears that this writer is mistaken, in supposing that it originated with the merchants and manufacturers of Exeter; which, in order to favour his argument, he states to be the case.

I shall proceed no further in reply to this writer's remarks; which, in many instances, I could prove to be totally inapplicable. I will only observe, that he pretends it to be the design of the bill to annihilate the business of the wool-dealer, though, as before-mentioned, there are many persons of this description in the committee.—As I have professed to seek assistance from every quarter, I shall willingly profit by the remarks
of

of this writer on those few defects of the bill that I had not noticed. In some cases, “the wounds of an enemy are preferable to the careffes of a friend.”

It is really a fatisfaction to me, my Lord, that I am at laft come to a conclufion of my remarks on the conduct of thofe who have oppofed the bill in this its infant ftate.— If moft of the bills which are brought into parliament, though framed by perfons converfant in parliamentary bufinefs, are, when examined, found too defective to pafs without amendment, furely fome lenity fhould be fhewn to a bill labouring under peculiar difficulties, and haftily produced, merely for the purpofe of making its principle more generally known, by being publifhed under the fanction of the Houfe of Commons.

I am very ready to allow, that even candid persons may have some reason to suppose that the manufacturers have been careful, in particular instances, to exempt themselves from the restrictions of the bill. But supposing the regulations respecting the wool-grower to be as burdensome as they are falsely represented by our opponents, ought no distinction to be made between the wool-grower, who can be affected by them only once or twice in a year, and the manufacturer, who would, under similar circumstances, be subject to them constantly?

I am, however, well aware that some further regulations must take place respecting the manufacturers, otherwise the bill will in a great measure be useless; and that some exemptions must be given up.

It

It is, however, peculiarly hard that the bill should be principally attacked on account of those exemptions which were inserted merely out of regard to the lesser manufacturers in the North of England, as well as to those on the Devonshire coast.

There is one clause which was introduced at the request of two gentlemen from Yorkshire, that has been particularly noticed, by our opponents, as discovering the real design of the manufacturers. On examining the bill when printed, it plainly appeared that this clause must undergo an alteration. This was declared to be the sentiments of the meeting by our public resolutions; it is therefore extremely uncandid to comment on it in such an invidious manner.* Had

* See the extracts from the bill published under the sanction of the Suffolk meetings.

Had those persons who composed the bill, considered *themselves only*, without any respect to the smaller manufacturers, the bill would have been more simple in its form; and these complaints of partial exemptions would, in a great measure, have been prevented.

The resolutions of different counties, that have been published in opposition to the bill, are mere copies of the Lincolnshire ones, except (as far as I can recollect) those of Suffolk. I have had an opportunity of consulting some persons who reside in the counties of Kent and Sussex, and they declare that, with a little alteration, the regulations will by no means be oppressive; and as the principle of the bill is already established in those counties, they are surely competent to decide on its merits in this respect.

Since

Since the county meeting in Suffex, another meeting has been held at Lewes, at which Lord Sheffield presided. At this meeting, the propofal of holding a wool-fair at Lewes was adopted; and they agreed to instruct their Representatives to obtain a repeal of those regulations in the present laws which respect the removal of wool.

By the laws now in force, it is not only impossible to hold a wool-fair at Lewes; but every wool-dealer residing within ten miles of the sea, in the counties of Kent and Suffex, is obliged to violate one clause in the present act, should he sell wool to any person residing within fifteen miles of the sea, as is apparent from the clause before quoted.

The bill in question, which Lord S. treated with so little ceremony, would, if
 passed

passed into a law, render this clause of no force, and, as far as at present appears, would not in other respects subject the county of Suffex to any new inconvenience.

It is declared in the resolutions of the other counties as well as Suffex, that the wool-growers already labour under sufficient restrictions. This mode of delivering their sentiments is very ambiguous.

If they mean by restrictions, that they are not permitted to export their wool, why are they afraid to declare their sentiments openly? This would be taking a manly and decided part, and would bring the contest to a short issue. Should they decline this ground, the only fair and candid mode of proceeding would
be

be to join with the manufacturers in endeavouring to find out the best expedient for preventing the smuggling of wool, provided it can be proved that large quantities are actually exported for want of more effectual regulations.

It may else be suspected, that though they are unwilling to avow the principle, yet their object is to oppose any regulation that may more effectually prevent the smuggling of this article.

Every ingenuous person, instead of involving a question in obscurity, would wish to strip it of all unnecessary appendages, and reduce it to as simple a form as possible. It is by no means my design, to raise improper suspicions in the mind of any man; but it is
my

my duty to point out the real ground of the argument, by stating it clearly and explicitly.

The method adopted in the county of Suffolk, of publishing those clauses in the bill which are deemed by their meetings to be most obnoxious, is in the highest degree partial, and has a tendency to impose on persons unacquainted with the wool laws; no notice whatever being given how far they agree or disagree with the laws now existing.

The very first clause selected for publication, by these resolutions, is grounded on the Act of Henry VIII. respecting the false winding of wool, and is no otherwise altered than appears to be absolutely necessary for the security of the purchaser of wool at present, except in one instance respecting the pitch-mark.

I shall

I shall however wave any discussion of the merits of this or any other clause in the bill, for the reasons which have been before assigned.

If ever effectual regulations for preventing the exportation of wool from this kingdom were necessary, they certainly are more peculiarly so at present.

Many years past I was informed by a person, who was then largely engaged in the exportation of woollens, that were a free trade opened to France, considerable quantities of our woollen goods would most certainly be introduced into that country.

My own experience fully confirms this opinion, having been applied to by French
woollen-

woollen-drapers, for recommendations to manufacturers in this country for these kind of goods.

The wool-grower will undoubtedly participate in those advantages which may arise to the manufacturers, from opening this new channel of trade, as the lower wools are already considerably advanced; no great generosity is therefore manifested on their parts, in opposing the manufacturers with so much violence, and in treating their proposals with such acrimony, on account of their being desirous of obtaining more effectual regulations, to prevent the exportation of wool.

The commercial intercourse which is likely to be established between the two countries,
will

will probably facilitate the smuggling of this article; and on this ground alone, it may be more necessary to adopt those regulations which may be pointed out by the promoters of the bill.

Your Lordship is too well acquainted with my general principles, to suppose that I can be an advocate for unnecessary restrictions on trade. These principles will ever influence my conduct, (as has been manifested on a former occasion) in giving my feeble support to measures that have for their object an extension of trade and commerce, and it is impossible for me to approve of any that may bear hard on a particular class of men, without examining, with the utmost attention, how far, they are necessary to the public good.

Similar

Similar inquiries to this which is now under consideration, have on former occasions engaged the attention of the manufacturers; but from some unknown causes, they never were brought to any decisive issue; and though the actual existence of the practice of smuggling wool could never be doubted by those persons who were competent judges, yet no particular accounts have ever been exhibited to Parliament, on which might be grounded a *probable opinion* of the quantity exported.

I shall endeavour to supply this defect as far as is in my power; being determined, if possible, to preclude the necessity of future inquiries on the subject. Had I enjoyed more leisure, I should have gone to France myself, which in all probability would have
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enabled me to have obtained more complete information, but what has been effected will at least lay a foundation for procuring a more accurate account of the quantity exported.

I hope it will be evident, by the tenor of all the arguments advanced in this publication, that I do not attempt to justify a prohibition of exporting wool, on any other ground than that of national advantage; and no manufacturer, who has a proper view of the subject, will be desirous (or in fact has any reason in point of interest) of vindicating it on any other principle.

Though the manufacturers may derive superior profit by the low price of wool, for a limited time, yet such is the competition in

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this business, that such an advantage cannot be of long duration. Whether the price of wool be advanced or not, provided any considerable fluctuation in its value can be prevented, the profit of the manufacturers will not be affected. Every person acquainted with the woollen business must know, that the general average of profit is so moderate as not to bear a diminution; and it is impossible it should be otherwise in such an extensive manufacture; the consumers of woollens will therefore alone be affected by a permanent rise in the price of wool.

It is futile to talk of the manufacturers combining together for the purpose of lowering the price of wool; there are too many opposite interests among them, for this ever to be effected, were they to attempt it. It is
 very

very true that, on the general principle of trade, they will endeavour to purchase the commodity at as cheap a rate as possible; and on the same principle, the wool-growers will be desirous of obtaining as good a price as can be procured; but causes, very different from combinations on either side, will fix the average price of the article.

In consequence of my situation, I have been held forth to public view, as a person who, by the assistance of his fellow manufacturers, is endeavouring to forge chains for binding the land-owners and wool-growers, and as a promoter of regulations, which “ a Turkish basha would be ashamed of.”

Warm and animated language, unrestrained by the sober dictates of Truth, and circula-

tated with the greatest industry, by those mediums of conveyance so common in this country, must in some measure affect the public opinion; and though it evinces but little magnanimity of mind to be affected by every idle cavil, that may be advanced against a person engaged in a public measure, yet I cannot be wholly insensible to those repeated efforts, which our opponents are making, in order to render myself, and those persons with whom I am concerned, obnoxious to the land-owners and wool-growers.

I really believe it would be difficult to find any set of men less influenced by private views, than those persons who compose the General Meeting in London; and I am confident that the proposals which will be submitted to their consideration, for altering
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some parts of the intended bill, which may be deemed too severe, will be cheerfully adopted.

For my own part, I can recollect no period of my life when the *Amor Patriæ* did not glow in my breast; and though I was not destined to serve my country in the line which my early youth most approved, yet the same spirit which (had it not been checked by a mother's fears) would have led me to the profession of arms, has constantly actuated my conduct; and I am confident that my mind is superior to the contracted views of private interest, when that interest appears to be in opposition to the public good.

Your Lordship and the public will, I hope, excuse this personal application, which

proceeds from a sensibility of soul, that cannot bear to be considered as an enemy to my country.

Had the intended bill been produced earlier in the session, it might possibly have prevented some embarrassment to several members of the House of Commons, who though they have declared themselves friendly to the measure, may be unwilling to act contrary to the sentiments contained in the resolutions of different meetings, held in the counties or towns represented by them.

Several unforeseen circumstances occurred to prevent the application to Parliament being made at the beginning of the session; and one principal reason of delaying it, has been owing to the state of my health, which
vented

prevented me from attending in London. Those gentlemen who are disposed to serve the manufacturers, and who were particularly consulted, will, I hope, admit this apology; as it is my earnest desire to finish the business with all possible dispatch.

In order to shew, that even those persons, who have contended for a limited exportation of wool, have yet admitted the necessity of enacting severe laws against the smuggling of this article, I shall subjoin the plan exhibited by Mr. *Smith*, which may be seen in his *History of Wool*. This extract may serve to exonerate the manufacturers from the charge of any improper severity in framing the different clauses in the proposed bill. But indeed this concern has now so much engaged the attention of the publick, that it cannot fail
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of being minutely discussed in Parliament, when it will appear how far the manufacturers are liable to the imputation of such a charge.

I intended to have made a few cursory observations on the Commercial Treaty, as it may affect the woollen manufacture of this country, having seen nothing on the subject that has given me any satisfaction. That such a publication as the '*Woollen-Draper's Letter*' should pass through two editions; can only be accounted for from the general desire of seeing what could be said by a person adopting such an appellation; but this writer betrays almost a total ignorance in many points respecting the woollen business, and which a real woollen-draper, disposed to converse with clothiers, could scarcely be mistaken in.

The Monthly Reviewers have mentioned this performance in terms of approbation; but though they may be excused for not being able to point out his misrepresentations, which those persons who are acquainted with the business of the clothier can alone do; yet certainly they are in every respect competent to detect a weak and fallacious mode of reasoning. The only argument which this writer has advanced, (for every thing else is mere declamation) respecting the superior advantage of the French over the English manufacturer, is in the comparison he makes between the general taxes of France, and those of England, as contrasted with the number of people in each. But allowing *M. Necker's* statement to be accurate, on which this writer's position is founded, and that it may be possible to calculate, with some degree
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of accuracy, the population of each country; yet will any person pretend that it is possible, from the single circumstance of an English manufacturer paying more taxes than a French manufacturer, to ascertain whether a piece of cloth can be made cheaper in France than in England? Surely such inconclusive reasoning as this will never be deemed satisfactory by any person who wishes to form an impartial opinion on the subject.

In my opinion, arguments of a different kind (except what may be deemed general ones) from those which have come under my inspection, must be used, in order to prove how far the commercial treaty may be either beneficial or prejudicial to the woollen manufacture of this kingdom; but it requires a competent knowledge of the various kinds
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of woollen goods made in each kingdom, for any person to decide with tolerable accuracy on this point.

It appears to me, that the manufacturers of both kingdoms will derive advantage from an inspection of the fabricks, made in each country; and, as far as my own experience goes, a rivalship can never injure a manufacturer, except some peculiar circumstances should give his rival a decided superiority over him.

Though every real lover of his country must be desirous of securing those advantages which Providence has bestowed on us, yet the philosophic mind cannot but view with pleasure two great and powerful nations, that have for a series of years exerted their
 utmost

utmost endeavours to destroy each other, now uniting, with apparent cordiality, in promoting those measures which have a natural tendency to preserve the blessings of peace.

I must, however, drop any further consideration of this subject, having neither time nor ability of doing justice to it; and tho', in its remote consequences, it may have an influence on the immediate object of my inquiry, yet I must acknowledge it does not come under my direct notice.

I have now, my Lord, brought my subject to a conclusion; and I have only to request your Lordship's indulgence to those faults that may be discerned in this performance.

A writer

A writer who chuses to submit his thoughts to public notice, has no right to plead want of leisure, in extenuation of delivering crude and undigested notions, or for using weak and fallacious arguments; but there are circumstances which may be urged in a writer's favour for faults in point of stile and composition.

Having the care of a manufactory of no inconsiderable extent, and being also engaged in other concerns, it cannot be expected that I should find much time for writing.

The leisure moments that I have enjoyed while at Bath, (for the benefit of my health) have been employed partly in drawing up these observations; but I have been continually hindered by attention to other things of

of importance; and from the necessity I was under of often returning home, in order to inspect my own business: I shall therefore, I presume, be permitted to appeal to your Lordship and to the public on this ground, without the least appearance of affectation.

It has been my endeavour to arrange my materials with some kind of order, to avoid weak and inconclusive arguments, and to express my thoughts with perspicuity; but any further attention to composition than this, has been deemed by me unnecessary; and, indeed, my time would not admit of it.

If my readers are enabled to understand the subject, so far as to be capable of perceiving wherein the stress of the argument lies between the promoters of the bill, and its
opponents,

opponents, my end in writing will be answered.

Through the whole progress of this concern, I have avoided any application for support, but as founded in the rectitude of the measure; and I shall not therefore now attempt to make converts of my readers, by embellishing my page with a pompous display of the advantages derived to this kingdom by the woollen manufacture.

Permit me, my Lord, to acknowledge the just regard I entertain for those marks of attention which I have received from your Lordship, and which are esteemed by me, not so much on account of your high rank and station, as for the solid advantages which I derive from personal converse with you.

I have

I have also to thank you, my Lord, for permission to address myself to you publicly; and I now resign this performance to the candour of your Lordship and of the public.

I am,

My Lord,

with sincere regard,

Your Lordship's

obliged, and

most obedient servant,

JOHN ANSTIE.

Devizes, March 31st, 1787.

Mr. S M I T H's

S C H E M E

FOR PREVENTING

The illicit Exportation of Wool.

“ **N**O wool to be carried coastwise, or on
“ any river more than over a ferry in
“ the common ferry-boats.

“ A reward equal to 500 per cent. (instead
“ of all other rewards) to be paid out of the
“ public revenue for all wool, yarn, and
“ woollen goods, in a contraband trade seized
“ at sea, or unlawfully put on board any
“ navigable vessel whatsoever. The public to
“ avail itself out of the goods and chattles,
“ and other confiscables of the offender or of-
“ fenders, in the first place; and farther to be

“ entitled to one moiety of the forfeitures in
 “ such case incurred by laws now in being;
 “ the other moiety of the same to be to the
 “ crown. The captain, master, or chief
 “ mariner, having direction of such ship or
 “ navigable vessel, for the time being, with
 “ as many others of the crew as may be sup-
 “ posed privy to the lading thereof, (without
 “ discovering the same) to be always deemed
 “ as accomplices; and in case of non-payment
 “ of the whole penalty of the 500 per cent.
 “ to suffer death as felons. And (for pre-
 “ venting collusion) in case of any seizure,
 “ and that such accountable captain, master,
 “ or mariners, or some of them at least, are
 “ not apprehended and committed to some
 “ one of the King’s prisons; in that case the
 “ person or persons so seizing, to be intitled
 “ only to a moiety of the wool, &c. seized.”

In answer to those persons who might object that his plan would not absolutely prevent the smuggling of wool, he further adds,

“ That 500 per cent. reward to the seizer,
 “ at the expence of the transgressor, or with
 “ the forfeiture of his life, (the one or other
 “ not to be eluded) would be such a terror
 “ and discouragement as would certainly
 “ quash all attempts of that kind. And if
 “ this capital punishment be thought too
 “ severe, in this case particularly I only refer
 “ to the known allowed maxims, *Salus Rei-*
 “ *publicæ suprema lex est; volenti non fit in-*
 “ *juria*; and desire them to compare this
 “ clause with that statute, and the reason of
 “ it, which makes it death to have coining
 “ instruments found upon any person, &c.”

I wish it to be observed, that I do not mean to charge Mr. *Smith* with not having noticed the difference between Clothing and Combing wool; but that in all cases they are not distinguished by him with a sufficient degree of accuracy, which is particularly the case when he compares the price of English wools with those of other countries.

Though combing wool has not advanced in price equal with clothing wool, yet it is now (according to the accounts I have received) at much the same price it was before the last war, and the holders are in expectation of a further advance on it.

P O S T S C R I P T.

SINCE my letter was sent to the press, I have seen the 38th number of the Annals of Agriculture: though, for the reasons before assigned, I considered myself under no obligation to notice the objections of Mr. *Young*, yet I should deem myself unworthy of public confidence, were I to neglect vindicating my character against a charge of having asserted a falsehood.

When I sent my Card to the press, which was written at Bath, I really had no idea that any alteration whatever had been made in the clauses respecting insurance. It was so strongly impressed on my mind, that the clauses were left just as they stand in the present act, that I never thought of sending

for our proposed bill in order to examine into the matter. On this account, I scrupled not to assert, “ that the clause (clauses it should have been said) stood exactly as it does in the present bill.”

Those clauses were absolutely agreed in the Committee to remain just as they are in the laws now in force, and so in fact they stand at present, as to their real meaning and intention; but as all the acts relative to restrictions on wool, as they respect *Ireland*, will (if the proposed bill pass into a law) be discharged from the statutes, (that kingdom not being now bound by our laws) it was necessary for the Secretary to draw the clauses without noticing that kingdom, it being particularly mentioned in the act of 12 Geo. II. in which those clauses are contained.

Those

Those gentlemen who are possessed of the proposed bill, as printed by my direction, with references to the present laws, and distinguishing the alterations by particular marks against the clauses, will be able to judge for themselves how far Mr. R. has justified himself against the charge, in using the following language: “ Thus in the clause of insurances, “ in which the law at present is nearer than “ in any other case to the new proposition, “ there are no less than six alterations from “ the act of 12 Geo. II. besides others that “ are verbal only. What therefore are we to “ say to the Wiltshire Woolman, who pushed “ himself forward to tell us, that *this clause “ stands in the intended bill exactly as it does in “ the present laws*; and this in the same page “ as he falsely accuses me of inaccuracy of “ representation and patient investigation?”

I must

I must indeed plead guilty to the charge, so far as to acknowledge that I did not note the variation pointed out above; but I believe no candid person will ever accuse me of asserting a falsehood on this account, as I defy my opponent, or any other person, to prove that the real design or intention of the clauses is in the least altered from the original.

The Secretary, by retaining, in one instance, the particular words of an existing clause, though he has judiciously omitted naming *Ireland*, has left that part open to the attack of the person who has published "Observations on the Bill;" from which performance Mr. *Young* has given large quotations in his 3^d number. Had it been deemed prudent to make any alteration in the original bill, as delivered to the House of Commons, this, as well

well as some other trivial errors, would have been rectified in the new publication, which is in the hands of several persons.

Mr. *Young* has endeavoured further to destroy the effect of the charge exhibited against him, by the following passage: “ But
 “ again, I observe, that this retort is not at
 “ all requisite to my general argument, which
 “ went so largely to the system of restriction,
 “ that had the clause of insurance stood
 “ word for word as before, my attack upon
 “ it was equally just and proper.” Waving any observation on the inaccuracy with which he has expressed himself, which might be owing to haste in writing, it still remains with him to prove that the clause in question will destroy “ the immense and salutary traffic of insurance;” which is what, he had
 stated

stated in his first number, would be the consequence of it. Till he is able to prove this assertion, the inference which I drew from his argument will continue valid.—Whether his general attack on the bill (which I suppose is the meaning intended to be conveyed in the above recited passage) was equally *just and proper*, an impartial public must determine.

I beg it may be observed, that Mr. *Young* retains and enforces the charge which he originally exhibited against the promoters of the bill, *of designing to injure the Yorkshire manufacture*; as he has inserted the following passage in a note:—“ It is however worthy
 “ of remark, that one aim of this bill is le-
 “ velled against that fabrick, [viz. that of
 “ Yorkshire, which is mentioned in the pre-
 “ ceding part of the note] as if the mono-
 “ polists

“ polifts were jealous of a progress which is a
 “ real reproach to them.”

What can this writer say in his justification, for bringing such a charge against the framers of the bill, (or the *monopolists*, as he is pleased to call them) when I inform the public, that I have received a letter from the Chairman of the General Meeting in Yorkshire, proposing some alterations in the bill, principally in those clauses which relate to bonds and exemptions in favour of manufacturers, (which clauses I am convinced must be altered;) but not a single one in those which relate to the coast regulations for shipping wool.

I will not copy this writer's example, by making use of opprobrious language; (and

Indeed

indeed I am sorry that in one single instance I retorted his own expressions, however justly they were applied by me;) but shall leave the public to pass an impartial sentence on our respective merits in point of fidelity.

It is necessary for me to observe, that I have never published any remarks on Mr. *Young's* conduct, but what are contained in the Card inserted in the public papers, and also in this pamphlet.—Were I not anxious to send this addition to the press, I should notice other charges brought by him against the manufacturers, particularly what respects *Ireland*.—He asserts, that the present situation of that kingdom is owing more to the designs of Woolmen, (as he calls the manufacturers) than to any other cause. As well might he attribute it principally to the land-owners,
 who

who certainly proposed the act of Charles II. which prohibited the Irish from sending live cattle into this kingdom, and which was complained of at that time as a most grievous act.—Suppose the manufacturers in past times had contracted ideas relative to trade, it may with propriety be asked, were no other bodies of men then infected with the same narrow views?

Have the woollen manufacturers manifested no liberality of sentiment, by not opposing the repeal of those laws which prohibited Ireland from exporting her own woollen manufactures to foreign countries? Or was their general conduct, when the Irish propositions were under consideration, dictated by narrow and partial views? Mr. *Young* may possibly plead his being ignorant of the
 resolutions

resolutions which were passed by a considerable part of the manufacturers at that time. Let him however read the examination of the gentlemen from Birmingham, Manchester, and Hetruria, (the manufacturers of which places he has contrasted with the woollen manufacturers) before the House of Lords and Commons, and compare it with the examinations of different persons concerned in the woollen manufacture, before the privy council; and then, *on his own principles*, let him consider with what justice he has made the *invidious comparison*. Without pretending to arraign the opinions of other manufacturers, I am happy to observe, that the principles which it was my object to inculcate, when those propositions were under consideration, have now received almost general sanction.

Perhaps

Perhaps the transaction to which the author alludes, if minutely investigated, may be found to have originated in the private views of a few powerful individuals, rather than in the prejudices of the manufacturers in general; though these prejudices might be encouraged and drawn forth by artful and designing men.

To expect men in general to be free from any particular attachment to their own concerns, is absurd in itself; and indeed were manufacturers, or any other body of men, inattentive to what concerned their united and particular interest, the most fatal consequences might, from such inattention, descend to the community at large.—That person only deserves to be considered as possessing a truly liberal mind, who, sensible

ble of the necessity of an attachment to partial interests, endeavours, by the superior powers of his mind, to remove those improper prejudices which are naturally contracted by too great an attention to this principle.— He will endeavour to effect this salutary purpose, by examining the subject on which he chuses to exercise his thoughts, with the greatest care and attention; and (having done this without partiality) by demonstrating from well-established facts and just reasoning, that the indulgence of such prejudices must be really detrimental, not only to those persons whose interest appears to be more immediately concerned, but also to the public at large.

Though Mr. *Smith* was a professed advocate for a limited exportation of wool, yet he had
a sufficient

a sufficient degree of candour to use the following language, when speaking of the designs of the manufacturers:—" To this I rejoin, " that in the time of Cha. II. and since, a " right end has been proposed, only the means " have been mistaken." " Those who meant " best to their country honestly proposed, " that the profit of manufacturing the Eng- " lish wool should be to the people of this " kingdom, and not to foreigners."

In what a superior point of view would Mr. *Young* have appeared, if, instead of deforming his page with indiscriminate invective (for in vain does he attempt to screen the Yorkshire clothiers &c. from his general censures) against the woollen manufacturers, he had contented himself with urging his reasons, with all the force of *sound* argument he

might be capable of, against a measure which he deems impolitic and ufeless.

He may be assured, that, while I am honoured with the station in which I have been placed, I shall esteem it my duty to vindicate the conduct of the manufacturers; which, in the prosecution of this inquiry, has been manly and liberal; though, at the same time, my mind shall be preserved unbiassed, and attentive to what shall appear of public benefit in the further progress of this important concern.

THAT my readers may form their own opinion of the temper and stile of Mr. *Young's* composition, I have extracted a few passages from his last number, as I find that I was much mistaken in supposing that the *Annals of Agriculture* were generally read.

It

It would be paying this writer too great a compliment, were I, in consequence of his misrepresentations, to enter on a justification of those clauses in the bill which respect the wool-growers. That respectable body of men are intitled to too much regard from the legislature, to have any apprehensions of “being bound in shackles of iron by the manufacturers.” Such turgid expressions as this writer makes use of will neither add force or energy to his arguments.

*Extracts from the 38th Number of the Annals
of Agriculture.*

“ And here let me ask, what epithet is due to
 “ men who could coolly and deliberately sit down
 “ to transcribe a system of despotism, without one
 “ atom of feeling for so numerous and respectable
 “ a class of people, as the growers of wool—
 “ who could heap punishment on restriction—add
 “ fine to penalty—blacken misdemeanour into
 “ felony, and bind, with shackles of iron, a harm-
 “ less set of men, in every step and progress of
 “ their

“ their ordinary occupations? This is surely
 “ cruel; perhaps, wantonly cruel.”

“ It is the private views of private interest—the
 “ inordinate desires of extravagant profit—the
 “ arithmetic of the counter—the policy of the
 “ shop. To buy wool cheap, will add so much
 “ per cent. on the manufacturers’ capital. Not
 “ the profit of all the manufacturers of the king-
 “ dom;—there would have been something too
 “ liberal in that idea;—but the local ones of the
 “ West: hence the restrictions laid on the dealer,
 “ and the coasting trade, levelled so pointedly at
 “ the Yorkshire fabricks.”

“ Let us then hear no more from woolmen of the
 “ prosperity of land and manufactures being the
 “ same. Birmingham and Sheffield, Manchester
 “ and Hetruria, may talk that language—they
 “ have no such monopolies against the landed
 “ interest—their success is our prosperity.”

F I N I S.

